1:Murphy and Quain E-4,5 (1938) 1955
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line by canoe would involve a journey of several hundred miles through mostly uninhabited country. The southern approach is the only feasible one for surface transportation. Even this is difficult as canoes and pack animals are needed after leaving Cuyabá. Between that city and the upper Xingú, the Planalto de Matto Grosso intervenes. This is an extremely rugged upland, hard to traverse. The isolation of the area made difficulties for ethnologists, but these were more than compensated for by the intactness of the native cultures. The establishment in 1947 of an outpost and airstrip of the Fundação Brasil Central, located below the juncture of the Kuluene and Kuliseu rivers, has done much to overcome the physical obstacles. The near future should see a considerable increase in ethnographic data from the headwaters of the Xingú.

In 1938 the Trumaí village was situated on the Kuluene River near its juncture with the Kuliseu. The Kuluene is the easternmost of the six parallel rivers that form the headwaters of the Xingú. The Xingú, itself, is one of the largest of the rivers tributary to the Amazon. It joins the Amazon about two hundred miles from the mouth of that river, after flowing from south to north for approximately one thousand miles. The six rivers which flow parallel to each other for over two hundred miles and then join to form the Xingú are, from east to west, the Kuluene, Kuliseu, Batoví, Jatobá, Ronuro, and Steinen rivers. They rise in the uplands, flowing through plains country and gallery forest. Further downstream they widen out and begin their descent into the tropical rain forest. The open country between the streams diminishes and the area covered by forest increases. The terrain is flat with but slight elevations between the rivers. Opening on the rivers are marshy subsidiary streams and large systems of lagoons which extend for several miles. Adjacent to the Kuluene and Kuliseu are broad sections of periodically inundated savannah lands, which are little used by the Indian population.

The heavy rains from October to April have the same profound effect upon the annual cycle of life here as they do in other sections of the Brazilian rain forest. Of great importance, also, is the effect of the rains upon the soil. The rains are too heavy to allow the surface soil to retain them. The water runs off or sinks deeply into the loose earth, leaching the surface of minerals and making it poor for agriculture. Since no form of mineral replenishment is used, a garden plot becomes exhausted in about two or three years, or after two plantings.

Nevertheless, the rain forest is suitable for primitive agriculture, since the looseness of the soil makes it ideally adapted to the primitive tools in use. As the open grasslands in this section of South America have extremely poor soil and cannot be tilled with simple hand tools, the Trumaí, like other tropical forest peoples, are forced to make their gardens in forest clearings in locations that are not flooded annually.

[Text continues on p. 7]

1: Steinen--72 D, E-5 (1884) 1886 SP7 Bacairi
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Thirteenth Chapter

Meeting With the Trumaí

During the night Castro's canoe, the only one whose load was not brought to shore, floated away; in two hours it travels one legoa; Valentin and Satyr set out in pursuit.

122 31 Aug. φ 11° 46'.5, λ 31'.6, km. 18.12, total 466.81.
132 4:10 A.M.: I 744.0, dry. 19.2.
6:45 A.M.: I 744.6, II 737.0, dry. 19.4, wet. 19.0, strc. 9°, water 25.8.
5:40 P.M.: I 744.4, II 735.6, dry. 24.8, wet. 21.9, horizon hazy 4, wind = 0, water 27.9.
9:45 P.M.: I 745.0, dry. 20.8.

484 "Vem os compadres! oh, quantas canoas!" suddenly rang
501 out around 10:00; "the compadres are coming; oh, how many
609 canoes!" The soldiers hastened from the nearby camp in the forest; everyone armed himself and watched the canoes drawing up picturesquely in a long row -- and a magnificent sight it was as one after another came around the bend and slowly drifted down the Kuliseu. Two Indians stood erect, with quiet composure, their bows in readiness; a third sat in the center and scarcely moved the oar. We counted 14 canoes and 43 persons.